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(SPECIMEN.)

LECTURES

INDIA ON THE EVE OF THE
BRITISH CONQUEST.

SIDNEY OWEN

(Copied from the original.)

OXFORD
1871.

42



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LECTURES

ON

INDIA ON THE EVE OF THE
BRITISH CONQUEST.

BY

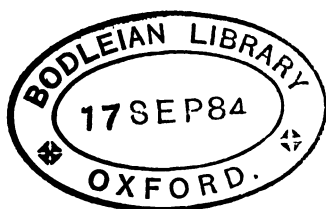
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LEADING DATES.

- 1627 Sivaji born.
- 1647 Builds Rajgurrh.
- 1657 May. First attacks the Moguls (100 years before Plassy).
- 1658 Aurungzib becomes Emperor.
- 1680 Sivaji dies.
- 1707 Aurungzib dies.
- 1723 Nizam-ul-Mulk settles in the Dekkan.
Baji Rao becomes Peishwa.
- 1740 Baji Rao dies.
- 1748 Nizam-ul-Mulk dies.
- 1761 Pondicherry falls.
Hyder Ally usurps the throne of Mysore.
Battle of Paniput.

THE STORY OF
SIVAJI,
THE FOUNDER OF THE MARATHA POWER.

(PUBLIC LECTURE),

Easter Term, 1870.

[*Unpublished.*]

SIVAJI,

THE FOUNDER OF

THE MARATHA POWER.

THE scene of the following narrative lies entirely in the southern, or more properly peninsular, portion of India, that is, south of the rivers Nerbudda and Mahanuddy; or what is called, using the word in its widest sense, the Dekkan, as opposed to India north of those rivers, or Hindostan.

The Dekkan itself is loosely divided by Hindoos into five great regions, Dravida, Carnata, Telingana, Gondwanch, and Maharashtra. With the wild region and primitive tribes of Gondwanch, east of the Wyne Gunga river, we have now no concern. Dravida extends from Cape Comorin to the Lake of Pulicat, north and south, and westward to the Eastern Ghats. Telingana lies north, Carnata north-west of Dravida, and both abut on Maharashtra. This last country, the home of the Maratha people, and chiefly the theatre of Sivaji's exploits, is bounded as follows: to the west, it has the Indian Ocean; on the north, it extends along the Saut-poor Range from Naumdode to the Wyne Gunga. This river limits it on the east, until the Wurda becomes the boundary as far as Manikdroog and Mahoor. Then the rambling Manjera separates it from Telingana; and speaking roughly, the Kistna and Malpurda are its southern confines.

Maharashtra is estimated to extend over upwards of 100,000 square miles. Its great determining

physical feature is the steep and lofty range of the Western Ghats, or Syhadree mountains, which extend far beyond its southern limits, and give occasion to a threefold geographical division into the Concan, or the country between the mountains and the sea; the Ghat Mahta, or the mountain region itself, often very wide; and the Desh, or table-land eastward of the Syhadree chain. The whole of Maharashtra is more or less hilly, and four transverse ranges of considerable height intersperse the table-land; namely, the Chandore, now often called the Northern Ghats; the Ahmednuggur chain; that just below Poona; and still further to the south the Mahadeo hills, near Satara. The Ghats Proper rise far above the table-land, and are surmounted by majestic and precipitous masses of rock, which form natural fortresses of imposing appearance, vast size, and very difficult access, especially when these original advantages are improved by the appliances even of rude native art. Long lateral spurs, and detached blocks of similar dimensions, penetrate far into the eastern upland, and enclosing deep and well-watered valleys, give an average of more than twenty miles in breadth to the Ghat Mahta.

These spurs and islands (as they would be called in Somersetshire), as well as the four principal transverse ranges already mentioned, were also crowned with a multitude of forts. The Concan varied in character; but especially below Bombay was mostly a rugged, broken, and impracticable country, the basement and buttress system (so to speak) of the soaring Syhadree Range, which sinking sometimes suddenly, sometimes more gradually towards the sea, poured down streams that in the monsoon became terrific torrents, and that have in all directions scarred and diversified the surface of the Concan, and increased the difficulty of road-making in such a region. Both the Concan and the Ghat Mahta were thickly wooded, particularly,

in each case, the valleys and glens; and the prodigious and continuous rainfall, the steepness of the passes, the dense and pestilential atmosphere of the jungles, and the frequency of sublime and terrible thunderstorms, made all warfare in such a district, during several months in each year, almost impossible. The historian of the Marathas, himself a soldier, pronounces that "in a military point of view there is probably no stronger country in the world."

Besides the Nerbudda and the Tapti, which rising far to the east flow westward into the Gulf of Cambay, three of the chief Dekkan rivers, the Godavery, the Kistna, and the Bima, descend from the Syhadree Range, and with their innumerable tributaries spread fertility in every direction over the table-land; though their deep-cut channels, and the comparative scantiness of their constant stream prevent all comparison with the exuberant fecundity of Bengal, and other lower regions on the eastern coast. On the banks of the Godavery, and its feeders, the Neera and the Maun, was reared a breed of horses unsurpassed for speed and vigor in any part of India.

The bulk of the population of Maharashtra was Hindoo, though Mahometan rulers had imported a considerable proportion of strangers in race as well as faith; and in the mountains, particularly towards the north, Bheels, Coolees, Ramoosees, and other primitive tribes abounded. Among the Hindoos, the sharply-defined fourfold caste classification of Menu had, as elsewhere, been replaced by a multitudinous subdivision on no intelligible principle, though not on that account necessarily the less rigid. The Brahmin, indeed, still retained both his name, his purity of blood, and his intellectual ascendancy; and in the person of the Peishwa was ere long to become virtually a secular sovereign. But he had for ages compromised in most cases his sacred character, and forfeited popular reverence by en-

gaging in mundane affairs; and the spiritual director of the Maratha was often a low caste man, sometimes (oddly enough) even a Mussulman.

So, too, the saints held in honor throughout the Maratha country belonged to all classes and creeds. The votary of Islam, and of the Jain worship, the *pariah*, and the primitive barbarian, alike attracted the respectful homage of the tolerant and fundamentally pantheistic Hindoo. Again, as among Hindoos generally, the undoubted Rajputs still claimed to be the surviving or re-created military caste; so the higher martial class among the Marathas made apparently reasonable pretensions to Rajput descent, and justified on this ground the practice of secluding their women in the Mussulman fashion, unless where a lady had to undertake active public duties. Sivaji, it will be seen, boasted royal blood on the mother's side.

Learning was almost confined to the Brahmins, many of whom, however, were extremely ignorant. Sivaji (I may mention), like Hyder Ally, could neither read nor write. The prevalent religious worship was that of Mahadeo or Siva, as denoted in the famous Maratha battle cry, *Hur! Hur! Mahadeo!*

At the time when our narrative opens, the Dekkan was in a more than usually disturbed and critical condition. On the dissolution of the older Delhi Empire in the fourteenth century, a powerful Mahometan monarchy, called the Bahminy, had been formed in Maharashtra; while further south a rival Hindoo State took its name from Bijanuggur, its capital. The Bahminy monarchy had been subsequently resolved into five separate kingdoms, two of which had been soon merged in the three larger Mussulman sovereignties of Ahmednuggur, Bijapoor, and Golconda: and the Hindoo dynasty of Bijanuggur had fallen a prey to its own corruption, and the attacks of its neighbours. Still later, Ahmednuggur had tempted the annexing dis-

position of the great Mogul Emperor Acber : he had begun, and his successors had completed, the absorption of that kingdom. In the last days of the falling state, Shahji, originally a Maratha soldier of fortune of humble birth, rose into importance in the public service ; and contributed for a while to arrest the progress of the imperial arms. He afterwards made his peace with the conqueror ; transferred his allegiance to Bijapoor ; and while the Emperor Shah Jehan's son, Prince Aurungzib, was meditating the reduction of the two surviving Mahometan powers of the Dekkan, Shahji assisted his new sovereign in waging war in Carnata, and making new and precarious additions to a dominion, whose limits should rather have been restricted, and its resources husbanded, against the imminent hostilities of the artful, powerful, and encroaching Mogul.

Shahji was the father of the extraordinary man whose career it is proposed to sketch.

Though the spirit of the hero is an original particle, an incalculable element in his composition, yet, as with common natures, his character is in a great degree formed, and the direction of his activity determined, by his circumstances.

“The child is father of the man.”

So it was with Sivaji. Born in the hill fort of Sewneree, in an age when old political arrangements were being fast dissolved, and thrones were tottering in every direction around him ; of a father who, after submitting alternately to three different sovereignties, helped to make war on a fourth ; entrusted to the separate care of a doating mother, who proudly traced back her lineage to the former Rajput monarchs of Maharashtra, the victims of the older tide of Mussulman conquest ; again and again, from his earliest infancy, the companion of that mother's flight from the Mogul arms ; hidden away in the hills by some unknown but friendly hand, when his mother was at last captured by her pursuers ;

intrusted later to the charge of a wise, faithful, patriotic, and pious Brahmin, Dadajee Konedeo (the manager of his father's Poona *jaghire*), under whom he learned to excel in horsemanship, and in warlike exercises, to observe strictly the rights of his religion, and to glow with admiring and sympathetic enthusiasm at the recital of the exploits of Gods and deified heroes; climbing the crag, leaping the foaming torrent, and tracking the fierce tiger to his lair, in company with the hardy and daring mountaineers, and winning golden opinions from these simple people by his audacity, skill, familiarity, humour, and instinctive air of authority; gaining in his excursions a thorough knowledge of the country, of its paths, its strongholds, and their condition, and of its assailable and defensible points; venturing presently with his lax companions on Gad's hill enterprises of a more than questionable character; warned back to more sedate and respectable avocations by his faithful mentor, and intrusted by him with civil functions, which enabled him by his engaging manners and conciliatory conduct to steal the hearts of the higher classes in the open country, as he had before captivated the rude hillmen:—such were the original circumstances and pursuits of Sivaji, which formed at once a natural introduction and an admirable training for his after career.

The precocity of Oriental heroes is often remarkable. Sivaji was but sixteen when he began to aspire to independent rule. Quick to discern his opportunity, he observed that the Bijapoor state, intent on conquest in the south, had neglected to garrison the majority of the unhealthy forts with government troops, and had left them in the hands of local and hereditary feudatories. With the aid of his three earliest adherents, he induced the governor of Torna, a strongly situated castle south of Poona, to put him in possession of it. He then sent agents to the king, with plausible tenders of

zealous service, and a higher rent than the late ruler had paid; which, backed by bribes to influential persons, postponed strict inquiry into his proceedings. Meanwhile he put Torna into a better posture of defence; and finding there a considerable treasure, he piously or prudently ascribed the god-send to the favour of Bhowanee, and employed it in arming his followers, and rearing another strong fort, which he called Rajgurh.

On his father's behalf, his guardian remonstrated, but in vain; and the Brahmin becoming a convert to his designs, or anxious to turn them to account in favor of his countrymen and co-religionists, sanctioned them with his dying breath, charging the young adventurer "to protect Brahmins, kine, and cultivators; to preserve the temples of the Hindoos from violation; and to follow the fortune which lay before him." Sivaji did not forget the injunction; and the last words of his venerable preceptor contributed powerfully to raise him, both in his own estimation and in that of others, from a leader of bandits into a champion of Hindoo freedom, nationality, and religion.

He assumed the management of his father's district, and contrived to evade paying over the revenue, on the ground of heavy current expenses. He next gained quiet possession of Chakun, an important fort north of Poona, and retained its commander in his own service, or nominally in that of his father, taking care that the people in the district should be well treated. Still more important was the acquisition of Kondaneh, where he bribed the commander, and which he now called Singurh—or the *lion's den*. His mother-in-law's brother, Baji Mohitey, was in office under Shahji at Sopa, and was little inclined to admit Sivaji's pretensions. In a night attack he was overpowered and taken prisoner with all his people; some of them entered their captor's service, the rest with Mohitey himself were sent off to join Shahji in

the Carnatic. Poorundhur, another considerable fort, was suddenly deprived by death of its commander. Three sons contested the situation. Sivaji undertook to mediate between them; on specious grounds effected an entrance with some of his followers, and made prisoners of all the brothers. Then his persuasive tongue won them over to his cause; and they served him faithfully.

Not a blow had been struck, not a drop of blood shed, in the course of these daring and crafty enterprises. The Maratha habitually prefers management to what he considers inartistic violence. Besides his civil jurisdiction, and the revenues which he drew on his father's account, he had now gained the military command of a large and strong district from Chakun to the Neera; and secure of a sound base of operations, and of an almost impregnable repository for his spoil, he prepared to descend into the plain, and try direct conclusions with the Bijapoor Government.

Having increased the number of his *Mawullees*, or foot soldiers from the *Mawuls* or valleys of the Ghat Mahta, and formed a body of 300 troopers, whom he mounted on horses captured at Sopa, he fell upon a royal convoy escorting treasure; carried off the spoil to Rajgurrh; and seized in rapid succession no less than six forts on the Ghats, just north-west of Poonah. Tala, Gossala, and the steep natural fastness of Rairee surrendered soon after; the Concan was invaded, and several wealthy places were sacked; lastly, one of his Brahmin followers took Kallian itself, and a number of forts dependent on it. Sivaji was in ecstasies. He gave the command of the district to the captor; established mild and popular regulations; and politely releasing the Governor of Kallian, allowed him to carry to Court the tidings of the now avowed revolution. Against the Seedee, the Abyssinian admiral of Bijapoor, who held the southern coast, he strengthened himself by erecting two new forts.

The king was violently incensed, and caused Shahji to be treacherously seized in the Carnatic by one of his own countrymen, Baji Ghorepuray, and sent to Bijapoor; where he was threatened with death if Sivaji should not submit. But the son rescued the father through the powerful mediation of the Emperor, whom as yet he had scrupulously refrained from provoking. For four years, however, Shahji was detained at Bijapoor, until the troubles in the Carnatic and Sivaji's quiet attitude induced the king to release him. He was bound over by oath to keep the peace towards his ensnarer; but intrusted the task of avenging him to his son, who at a later time repaid the debt with heavy interest. An attempt was made to entrap Sivaji himself. But, always well informed, he turned the tables on his assailants, and hunted them into the jungles. Shahji's liberation was the signal for renewed aggression on the part of his son. The Rajah of Jowlee administered a large tract of country between the Warna and the Kistna. Like Sivaji he was a Maratha, and disposed to keep on friendly terms with the rebel, but neither to submit to him, nor himself to rise against Bijapoor. And he was powerful, valiant, the head of a warlike house, and well provided with soldiers. Sivaji had a grievance against him for having given passage to his pursuers. But he preferred to act covertly. Two of his influential envoys appeared at Chunder Rao's Court, and sought his daughter's hand for their master. Pending the negotiation, they proposed to assassinate the Rajah. Sivaji approved the dark design, and moved stealthily up with his troops to take advantage of the consequent confusion. The Rajah and his brother were slain; the assassins escaped; and the place, after an obstinate defence, was taken. Its dependencies were also occupied; but popular Hindoo sentiment strongly disapproved of this treacherous and cruel treatment of a Hindoo Princelet. Rohira, the

chief place of a large district between the Neera and the Kistna was soon after scaled in the night, and its commander slain. The completion of this second great stage in his progress to dominion was commemorated by the erection of Pertabgurh, and the appointment of the first Peishwa Shamraje Punt.

Sivaji had hitherto invariably respected the Mogul boundary. He had even made overtures to enter the imperial service. And Aurungzib, who at this time represented Shah Jehan in the Dekkan, was very anxious to form a friendly league with one, who could lend him valuable assistance in his scheme of reducing both Bijapoor and Golcondah. But Sivaji, coolly calculating the odds, though he gave fair words, concluded that more was to be gained at present by a rapid raid into the imperial territory, while the Prince with the bulk of his army was making war upon Bijapoor. He accordingly fell upon the large town of Joonere by night, carried off much money and other *loot*, including 200 horses: and followed up this bold step by the still bolder surprise of Ahmednuggur, whence he drove away 700 horses and four elephants. Henceforth his warfare changed considerably. Though his *Mawullees* and other Maratha foot-soldiers continued as active and useful as ever, he organized a large body of cavalry; and shortly after, with much hesitation, consented to admit a proportion of Affghan or Pathan infantry, who, though less adapted to his earlier circumstances, were of importance as he advanced towards normal sovereignty, and began to make occasional stands against regular armies in the field.

For the moment, however, he had miscalculated. Aurungzib's arms and arts were so rapidly successful that Bijapoor was besieged, and seemed on the point of falling: and Sivaji began, in anticipation of the exasperated conqueror's vengeance, to humble himself abjectly, when the announcement

that Shah Jehan was seriously ill produced a sudden and momentous revolution in Indian politics. Aurungzib patched up a peace with Bijapoor; marched off to the north; by a remarkable combination of energy, bravery, duplicity, and cruelty, circumvented and destroyed in turn all his brothers; deposed the aged Emperor; and seated himself upon the throne of the great Mogul as *Alumgeer*, or *Conqueror of the World*. Meanwhile Sivaji had renewed his submission, promised fidelity, and plausibly represented that his increased numbers were designed to serve Aurungzib's purpose. In return he demanded the concession of certain beneficiary and revenue rights within the imperial territory, which he represented as traditional in his family; and hinted that he could govern the Concan much better than the Royal official stationed there. Aurungzib in the crisis of his own fate temporised; pardoned Sivaji; allowed him to wage war in the Concan; but stipulated for 500 cavalry—which were *not* sent, and promised to consider Sivaji's claims—which were *not* now pressed. Each of these consummate dissemblers was in fact playing with the other: they were well matched at such a game; but the serious contest between them was postponed.

Sivaji promptly sent the Peishwa with a large body of troops into the Concan. But the Seedee gained a bloody victory over them. Shamraje was recalled and deprived of his office; and this first check heralded a more serious crisis. Humbled by Aurungzib, torn by faction, and their king a mere boy, the Bijapoor Court yet felt the necessity of attempting to crush its aspiring rebel before he should again be able to co-operate seriously with the Mogul. A select and finely-appointed army of 12,000 men was collected under an eminent noble, Afzool Khan, who, with Ney-like vaunting, promised soon to present Sivaji in chains before his sovereign's footstool. The Maratha saw that open re-

sistance was out of the question, and fell back upon his favorite arts. He shut himself up in Pertabgurrh, affected extreme terror, professed his readiness to abandon all his possessions, could he but be assured of the powerful intercession of the renowned Afzool Khan. The vanity of the haughty Mussulman was touched; and he sent a Brahmin agent, Puntoji Gopinat, to negotiate. After a formal public interview, Sivaji in the dead of night, appeared alone before Puntoji, appealed expressly to his own divine mission from Bhowanee, and to the more unquestionable selfishness of his hearer, and gained him over completely to his own interest. For the good of the great cause it was resolved that Afzool Khan should be made a memorable victim. He was by Puntoji's help lured to a private colloquy; a single attendant only stood near him; his troops were at a distance; the Marathas were secretly posted on all sides in the thick jungle. Sivaji meanwhile "having performed," says his historian, "his ablutions with much earnestness, laid his head at his mother's feet, and besought her blessing." Then he secreted under his clothes a coat of mail, and a dagger; and his left hand concealed a *wagnuck*, a deadly instrument called from, and somewhat resembling, the claws of the tiger. Thus prepared, and crouching as in fear, he slowly approaches the unsuspecting and linen-clad general; and folding him in a ceremonious embrace, buries the *wagnuck* in his body, following up the blow by another with his dagger. His armour saves him from a sword-cut aimed at him by the dying man, whose head is carried off to Pertabgurrh, and whose fall is the signal for a general onset on his troops, who are quickly destroyed, captured, or dispersed. Afzool Khan's son and family were saved by a Maratha whom they had bribed. But Sivaji beheaded his follower for this venial act of insubordination; though he spared and treated well most of his prisoners, and released a fellow-tribes-

man of importance, who declined to desert Bijapoor and share his fortunes. Many Marathas, however, took service with him.

This perfidious and bloody deed was highly applauded in Maharashtra; and Sivaji at once gained by it 4,000 horses, besides elephants, camels, a well-filled military chest, guns, and stores. In the first shock of the tragic occurrence, moreover, the very important fortress of Panalla was also surrendered to him; Powan Gurh experienced the same fate; and Sivaji lost no time in reducing Wussuntgurh and a number of other forts, and levying black mail along the Kistna. Next he routed another officer who had been sent against him, and dashing across the country almost to the gates of Bijapoor, spread general havoc and dismay; under cover of which he rushed down the Ghats, and while he was believed to be still on the table-land, Dabul and other places were seized, Rajapoor put to heavy ransom, and Rajgurh was enriched almost at once with the miscellaneous plunder of the upper and the lower country.

Indignant and terror-stricken at this most unexpected issue of the first serious attempt to subdue Sivaji in regular warfare, the distracted Government for a while suspended its disputes; and a second army, twice as numerous as Afzool Khan's, marched under a distinguished officer, Salabut Khan, to co-operate with the Seedee and the Sawunts of Waree, who were to conduct a joint attack from the Concan. Sivaji made prompt and careful dispositions to resist his enemies in each quarter. But he found too late that he had committed a great mistake in undertaking to defend Panalla in person. Here he was blocked up for four months, unable to exert his usual vigilance and control over the operations of his troops. To hold out, and to escape, seemed equally impossible. He proposed to surrender; in a personal interview with Salabut arranged all matters of importance; and the next day

was to open his gates. The besiegers, so near the term of their labors, slept securely; and woke to find that in the darkness Sivaji, with a picked band, had passed through the midst of them, and was far on his way to Rangna. A hot pursuit took place; and the fugitives were overtaken within six miles of their destination. Confiding the defence of a narrow pass to Baji Purvoo, once an enemy, now a devoted follower, Sivaji pushed on. Thrice the pursuers were gallantly repulsed by the little band in the pass; a fourth time they advanced under the avenger of blood, Fazil, the son of the murdered Afzool Khan. A desperate contest ensued. Half of the covering party, including their brave leader, fell; and the post was forced. But as the mist of death was gathering over the eyes of Sivaji's lieutenant he learnt, by a signal gun from Panalla, that his beloved master was safe; and the survivors made good their retreat, carrying off in the teeth of the enemy Baji Purvoo's body.

The king, taking the field in person, re-captured Panalla, Powangurh, and many other of Sivaji's recent acquisitions; while *he* again assailed and plundered Rajahpore, and reduced Sringeripore, the capital of a *Maratha* chieftain, who fell in the contest. This act also was condemned by Hindoo sentiment; and Sivaji, half by way of atonement, half apparently from deepening superstition, henceforth became more devoted than ever to religious rites, and built a temple to Bhownee at Pertabgurh. Meanwhile he pressed his operations against the Seede with various success. But he swooped presently upon a more tempting prey. Baji Ghorepuray, who had entrapped Shahji, and had been commended by him to Sivaji's vengeance, was now preparing to march against the irrepressible outlaw. Sivaji came upon him unawares in the bosom of his family, killed him and the bulk of his household, fired their place, and retired unopposed.

Disturbances in the Carnatic compelled the Go-

vernment to recal the army destined to act against Sivaji, and thus he was enabled to conquer the Sawunts of Waree, and to retrieve most of his recent losses above the Ghats. He now occupied various ports, began to construct a navy, and procured artillery from Goa. At length Shahji seems to have brought about a reconciliation with Bijapur. The old man was enchanted at his son's punishment of Ghorepuray, and paid Sivaji a visit, who received him with graceful reverence.

"Sivaji," says the historian of the Marathas, "now possessed the whole of the continent of the Concan, from Kallian to Goa, a length of coast about four degrees of latitude; and the Concan Ghaut Mahta, from the Beema to the Warna, a distance of about 160 English miles." He is said to have had at this time an army of 50,000 foot and 7,000 horse. And he now removed the seat of his government to Rairee, the name of which he changed to Raigurh, and which he fortified in a very elaborate manner. He then resumed operations against the Moguls. While one of his officers captured forts far to the north, another made a rapid excursion to the immediate neighbourhood of Aurungabad, laying the whole country under contribution, and exciting general dismay.

The Emperor ordered his lieutenant, Shaisteh Khan, to reduce the insolent *rebels*. Chakun was besieged, but held out for two months; and its brave defender, when compelled to surrender, declined to abandon Sivaji's service for that of the Emperor. Shaisteh Khan occupied Poona, and took up his own quarters in a house formerly inhabited by Sivaji and his mother. The towering steep of Singurh overlooked the city, which was unwallled. Sivaji betook himself to his eerie fastness; descended with a numerous party, most of whom he disposed along the road to Poona; stole with a chosen band into the town, and joining in a marriage procession, made his way to the familiar

house in the dark ; effected an entrance ; dispatched most of the inmates ; lopped off the Khan's finger as he was letting himself down, in undignified haste, through a window ; retired safely with his companions :—and the Moguls could, by the light of his mocking torches, trace his triumphant rescent to his rocky den.

Next morning, for the first time, the Maratha horsemen pursued and routed a lordly squadron of Mogul cavalry, which had advanced in bravado to the foot of the hill.

Shaisteh Khan was disheartened, and recalled. And before his successor could accomplish anything, Sivaji, extending the sphere of his evolutions, darted off with 4,000 cavalry to Surat ; plundered it for six days of immense wealth (though the English resisted him), and returned to hear that Shahji was dead. He now took the title of Rajah, and coined money in his own name. While his vessels swept the sea, and seized and put to ransom the holy pilgrims bound to Arabia, he renewed his own depredations on land, penetrating close to Aurungabad itself, and plundering the town of Ahmednuggur.

Meanwhile, two Bijapoor generals had thought the occasion favorable for reconquering the Concan, but Sivaji overtook them, and defeated them with terrible slaughter. Then he returned to face the Moguls ; and again, while he was still believed to be on the point of attacking their camp, he made his way to the coast, embarked, plundered Barcelore, one hundred and thirty miles south of Goa, and many other places ; sent his troops back by land, and re-embarking, suffered much from storms and sea sickness, before with unwonted tardiness he could regain his capital. His superstitious countrymen discerned in this bad passage the displeasure of Bhowanee, at her *protegé's* adventuring on the forbidden waters. Nor did he repeat the unpropitious and uncomfortable experiment.

Aurangzib was too suspicious of his subordinates, too contemptuous of the *mountain rat*, as he called Sivaji, and too anxious to effect the reduction of the Dekkan in person, when his affairs in the north should admit of it, to take such steps as would have finished the war at a stroke. He had, however, now entrusted the command of a powerful army to two generals whom he disliked, but who might act as a check both on Sivaji, and on each other. One was the renowned Rajput chief, Rajah Jey Sing; the other an Afghan, Dilere Khan. Possibly Sivaji and his people had scruples at contending against an unquestionable representative of the oldest and proudest race of whilome Hindoo sovereigns; while *he* was but an upstart Rajah, and, at the most, but a partial scion of that sacred stock. Certain it seems to be that both he and his chiefs lost heart, though his soldiers gallantly defended Poorundhur against Jey Sing in person. While the place still held out, Sivaji having prepared the way by negotiation, and obtained Jey Sing's plighted word—which he knew he could trust—for his safety, pardon, and entertainment by the Emperor, made his way to the Rajput's camp, tendered his submission, and was kindly received. Dilere Khan was more implacable, but was propitiated by Sivaji's personally offering him the keys of Poorundhur. Terms were arranged, and the Maratha abandoned all his conquests from the Moguls, and consented to hold his remaining territory as a *fief* under the Emperor. His son was to receive an honorary military command; and he requested to be allowed to prosecute certain claims on Bijapoor. Aurungzib ratified the conditions, though without specifically sanctioning the claims in question, which were no less than the famous *Chouth* and *Surdeshmookhee*, or a fourth and tenth of the revenue; on the plea of exacting which, not only the Bijapoor territory, but all India, was afterwards convulsed and periodically plundered. Thus reconciled, and recognised as a legitimate

ruler, though with curtailed dominion, Sivaji served with distinction in the imperial army against Bijapur; and shortly after accepted the Emperor's invitation to visit Delhi, still under the safeguard of Jey Sing's plighted word.

He took strict precautions for the guidance of his own conduct at the Mogul Court, and for the safety and regulation of his own community during his absence. Then with 500 chosen horsemen, 1,000 *Mawullees*, and his young son Sambaji, he departed to seek his fortunes in a sphere altogether different from that in which he had hitherto distinguished himself. Aurungzib's reception was cold and disparaging. The hitherto successful adventurer was galled to the quick, probably all the more so, from being involuntarily dazzled by the unwonted display of imperial magnificence, and somewhat nonplussed by the suave and silky manners of the courtiers around him. He bluntly expressed his disgust; and received a polite hint, that the sight of him did not refresh the Great Mogul's eyes. A written petition, recapitulating the circumstances which had caused his appearance at Delhi, and intended to test Aurungzib's disposition towards him, rather widened the opening breach; and Sivaji soon found himself almost a prisoner, though at large. How should he quit this uncongenial scene, and at the head of his army hurl renewed defiance at the haughty and capricious tyrant? First he obtained ready permission for his soldiers to retire from what he represented as a climate unhealthy to them. But his durance became stricter. Still, relying on the connivance of Jey Sing's son (who respected his father's pledge), and free to consort with the nobles of the Court, he cultivated them and made them frequent presents. Then finding himself almost a close prisoner, he professed to fall ill; took medicine; and seemed reduced to a very weak state. But from his sick bed he still sent ample gifts of sweetmeats to his

new friends, and to devotees at the mosques both inside and without the city. These were carried forth from his quarters at all hours in huge baskets. Late one day it was ascertained that the recumbent invalid was a changeling. A servant had occupied his master's place; while Sivaji and his son had vanished, each under his separate *bombon* cover, and were already safe out of the Emperor's reach. Leaving Sambaji to the care of a Maratha Brahmin at Muttra, the fugitive rode for his life, and after an absence of nine months reappeared at Raigurh, unhurt, and with an important store of information as to the characters and views of Mogul politicians. He immediately recommenced a war of aggression; and his "safe arrival in the Concan was announced by the recapture of a great portion of the province of Kallian."

Mortified at Sivaji's escape and continued success, Aurungzib replaced Jey Sing and Dilere Khan by his son Prince Mauzum and Jeswunt Sing, another distinguished Rajput chief, whom Sivaji had courted at Delhi, and ascertained to be open to bribery, as well as tenderly disposed towards the asserter of Hindooism. And the Prince was much guided by the Rajput. How far from their friendly disposition aided by bribes, how far from Aurungzib's desire to lull his wily adversary into a treacherous security, and entrap him anew, is not very clear; but certain it is that friendly relations were restored; the Emperor acknowledged the Rajahship of the Maratha, gave him a *jaghire* or fief in Berar; and raised the young Sambaji to the promised military post. The Poona, Chakun, and Sopa districts were also restored, but Singurh and Poorundhur were still garrisoned by imperial troops, as a check on the slippery tendencies of so uncertain a feudatory. Thus matters continued for two years; but at the end of that time a mandate arrived from Delhi to apprehend Sivaji and some of his chief officers. Again, however, Aurungzib counted

without his host, who, duly informed, at once took his measures. Singurh was escalated in the most gallant style at night; its terrible precipices were surmounted with the help of rope ladders; a terrific and doubtful combat ensued between the valiant Rajput garrison and the desperate *Mawullee* assailants; Tannaji Maloosray, Sivaji's oldest and staunchest companion, was slain in leading the attack, and his soldiers appalled at his loss were forced back to the edge of the declivity; but they were rallied and led on again by his brother; and after losing a third of their force, and slaying or driving over the precipice twice that number of their antagonists, they made themselves masters of the place; and a month later Poorundhur also was recovered. Thus Sivaji's communications between his northern and southern territories above the Ghats were again open; and fresh successes crowned his efforts in all directions, though he failed to take Jinjeera, which was transferred to the Mogul.

Again, with 15,000 men he attacked and plundered Surat, and on quitting it left a formal demand of twelve *lakhs* annually, to avert a repetition of the visit. On his return he was intercepted by two Mogul armies near the Nassuck Pass. Dividing his men, he fell upon and kept in play the larger body, while a select band carried off his plunder. Then he routed the enemy in his rear, and promptly wheeled and defeated the main host, capturing and afterwards releasing and sending home a valiant Maratha lady, who had commanded a party of her countrymen in the Emperor's service.

The *chouth* was shortly after levied for the first time in an imperial province, that of Camdeish. And the Moguls sustained the most severe defeat ever inflicted on them during Sivaji's lifetime; while an attempt to block up the passes, and confine the Marathas to their mountains, ended in more daring and systematic incursions than before.

At this time the King of Bijapoor died, and Sivaji at once took up arms against his successor. An unprecedented amount of plunder was realised; the imperial officers were apparently bribed into quiescence; and Satara, and many other places of consequence, annexed to his dominions. He now formally ascended the throne, and assumed the state for which his deeds, his actual power, and popular acclamation, had long proclaimed his fitness. But he never deviated, in personal conduct, from the energetic simplicity of his earlier years.

How he at length made peace both with the Imperialists and with Bijapoor; strengthened his frontier with a continuous line of forts; how, his hands thus free, and his territory better guarded than before, he marched with 70,000 men eastward; duped the King of Golconda; made conquests at his expense; compelled his half-brother Vencaji to yield the legal portion of their father's inheritance in Carnata; made further conquests on his return march; interposed in favor of his old and now expiring enemy Bijapoor against the gathering hosts of the beleaguering Moguls; how he once more displayed, in assailing their rear, cutting off their supplies, evading their pursuit, matchless skill in his characteristic mode of warfare; how he died suddenly of fever at the age of fifty-three, and left his throne to a degenerate successor, who soon fell a victim to Aurungzib's vengeance; lastly, how the Maratha power which he had founded, when on the verge of extinction, suddenly awoke to new life, overspread the Continent, and tyrannised over it for the greater part of a century:—time forbids me to do more than mention.

Such then was Sivaji: a man difficult to describe except by his actions, (which I have done my best to represent faithfully); and by his institutions, (which, though curious and characteristic, must not now be entered on). His good and bad qualities, the causes of his success, and the steps of his

progress, I have tried to indicate in the course of the preceding sketch, and may forbear to recapitulate them at the close of a lecture already quite long enough.

The romantic character of his adventures, the momentous results of his career, and the fact that he is still the cherished idol and half-deified hero of Maharashtra, alike appear to justify an endeavor to interest Englishmen in his fortunes.

The recurrence in India at present of such a career as his, is, thank God! impossible, almost inconceivable. But is it not a little ominous that, while few Englishmen care to hear of him, or of so many other famous men who have left their mark indelibly upon the greatest and most critical dependency of the British Crown, he still occupies so prominent a place in the imagination and affections of his people?

The ghastly tragedy of Cawnpore, the vindictive work of one whom our Government had declined to recognise as the adopted son of the deposed Peishwa, has too recently attested the patient vitality of Maratha hatred.

While Russia is close on our Punjab borders, America not too friendly, and our Indian Exchequer not too flourishing, may no self-complacent ignorance, on our part, of the feelings of our fellow-subjects, no contemptuous disregard of their deep-rooted prejudices, no supine indifference to their fair claims, henceforth tempt them to brood more than is good either for them or for us over the olden tale,—how Marathas threw off the yoke of Bijapoor, destroyed the mighty Mogul Empire, and rose to sovereignty on its ruins!

THE PHYSICAL FEATURES OF INDIA.

LECTURE I.

(Lent Term, 1871.)



LECTURE I.

THE PHYSICAL FEATURES OF INDIA.

THE natural limits and the larger permanent divisions of India are strongly marked.

Wherever the sea does not wash its borders, it is at once connected with, and separated from, Higher Asia by the culminating region of the Stony Girdle of the Earth, or its lateral offshoots. The Himalaya, sweeping southwards at the Hindoo Koosh, is continued on a smaller scale in the Suleiman mountains; and the Hala range prolongs the barrier to the western sea. While on the east, the bold promontory of the Garrows and the Cossya Hills, determining and overhanging the valley of the Brahmaputra, are but a projecting spur of the Burmese mountains, which look down upon Aracan, feed the sources of the foreign Irawaddy, and separate India from China.

Hardly less distinct than its boundaries are the great regions into which the character of its superficies naturally resolves the country. A vast, depressed, and typical area of river basins and deltas in the north; a mountain girdled, and irregularly diamond-shaped table land in the centre; a maritime lowland on either side, converging and communicating with each other at the southern extremity of the table land; lastly, a solid, wedge-shaped district in the extreme south, high in the centre, falling eastward and westward towards the

sea, and having its apex at Cape Comorin :—such in the most general way seems to be an account of the country, however brief, not incorrect, or unimportant in illustration of the minuter phenomena of Indian Geography.

The Aravulli range, commencing geologically speaking in Kattywar, forms the eastern watershed of the Indus Valley ; or rather ought to form it, but, from a circumstance which will be noticed presently, hardly fulfils the office. From the northern point of the Aravulli, the high land margin trends south-eastward, almost parallel to the Himalayas, until at the Rajmahal Hills it suddenly turns sharp south-westward, and continued through Orissa in the Nelligreen and other mountains, joins or rather becomes the Eastern Ghats. This great chain—The Ghats—though differing much in different parts, both as to character and elevation, is the continuous fringe of the table land southward, across the Peninsula, (where the Neelgherries are its highest summits,) and again westward, till it once more approaches Kattywar, near the Gulf of Cambay.

The Neelgherries look down on a sort of funnel-shaped pass, the highest point of which is at Palghat, and which is called the Gap of Coimbatore.

Hence the triangular extremity of the Peninsula commences; and the Cardamum Hills are, as it were, the spinal cord of the land in this remote region.

In a general and comparative sense it is true, and for practical purposes useful, to describe the diamond-shaped central block as a table land, girdled by mountains. But while, on the north, the steep crest that looms over the Gangetic and Jumna Valley is not strictly a mountain range; this is almost equally true of many parts of the so-called Eastern Ghats. And even the Western,

though the highest, and very abrupt towards the sea, are comparatively little elevated above the plateau which they fringe. Still more necessary is it, when we come to details, to discriminate clearly the varying elevations and depressions of the central table land itself.

The highest region of all is the Neelgherries. The Western Ghats are considerably higher than the Eastern. The general slope of the table land between them is decidedly eastward, and to a certain extent northward. But about the meridian where the Peninsula properly so called ends, the geography is complicated, and both physical and political India are dichotomised, by several circumstances which have been reserved for what appeared their most appropriate place. If a line be drawn westward from Calcutta, and another southward from Allahabad, they will intersect each other at a point where the table land reaches its highest elevation, except at the Neelgherries. Here, near the Hindoo place of pilgrimage Amercuntuc, the Mekal Hills collect the clouds, and disperse the waters of the Dekkan in all directions. Hence the Sone flows northward to the Ganges; the Hasdoo, &c. feed the eastern stream of the Mahanuddy; the Wyne Gunga drops southward towards the far-off Godavery; while the Nerbudda strikes due westward to the Gulf of Cambay. So noteworthy is this wild region in a physical point of view; though in Indian history it is more conspicuous by its absence. Quite otherwise is the case with the famous river which it sends westward. Physically and historically, the mature stream of the Nerbudda and its confines are equally memorable. In the latter respect I will only now repeat a name which I formerly ventured to apply to it; and in calling it the Loire of India postpone any further justification or explanation of the term than is

implied in the fact, that it separates Hindostan Proper from the "Region of the South"—or in native phrase, the Dekkan. But as to its physical surrounding I must explain, that the barrier of demarcation between the North and the South is not single, but five-fold. The northern bank of the Nerbudda is also the brow of the far-famed Vindhya mountains, which continued in the Meyhar, the Kymore, and the Keinjua ranges, accompany the Sone in its pilgrimage to the Ganges. Again, the Nerbudda is overlooked, and separated from its companion westward stream, the Tapti, by the Sautpoora mountains, geologically a formation distinct from the Vindhya. While, lastly, the Western Ghats, just south of the Tapti, are continued to the eastward in what ought properly to be called—though the term is hardly yet fully recognised—the Northern Ghats. Such is the remarkable and multiform line of separation between Hindostan and the Dekkan. For the present I may assume, that the southern table land is tolerably equable in general elevation. But it must be mentioned that, while the whole tetragon enclosed between the Vindhya, the range that borders Guzerat on the east, the Aravulli, and the southern crest of the Gangetic Valley—is a lofty region, this is specially true of the high table land of Malwa; less so of the wild Bundelkund country; and least (I believe) of the eastern corner towards the Sone and the Kymore range.

From the nature of the case, as well as from what has been now said, it may be inferred, that the subordinate geographical features of India may be described as deducible partly from the form and other circumstances of the Great Continent, partly from those of India Proper—or the Peninsula, strictly so called. Or, in other words, paradoxical as it may sound, that India Proper

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and its distinctive geography begin, pretty much where Hindostan Proper, or that part more nearly related to Asia, ends. Thus, whereas it is a familiar coincidence that the line of highest elevation should be found to follow the direction of the longest land, the Himalayas fulfil this condition in the case of the Great Continent; the Eastern and Western Ghats in that of the Peninsula. So too, both the origin, the size, and the general character and direction of the four mighty northern rivers are essentially Asiatic: whereas the chief Dekkan streams agree in rising far to the west—all but one in the Western Ghats—flowing eastward into the Bay of Bengal; being deep channelled, yet shallow watered, turbulent and unnavigable in the higher country; and in depositing a fertile and spacious delta at their respective mouths, mostly fringed and impeded by a heavy bar and a rough surf.

The Great Indian Desert again, on the east of the Indus, is but a continuation of its more widely diffused and famous western counterparts. I may add that the direction and position of the steep and lofty Western Ghats, the rockbound coast, and narrow space of land at their base, the consequent absence of great rivers on that side, (though small streams and torrents are innumerable,) the direction of the rivers eastward, the wide expanse of low land on the eastern coast, and the deltas, are a combination of phenomena more or less exactly reproduced in America, Africa, Scandinavia, and in our own country.

The Vindhya, Sautpoora, and Northern Ghats, as well as the two rivers that run between them, though more obviously connected with India than with Asia, yet in their direction seem to ape the eastern and western *pose* of the colossal chain, that dwarfs them into comparative insignificance.

The great Asiatico-Indian rivers have certain points of resemblance. Fed from the highest watershed in the world, they attest their common source by a volume of water, an impetuosity of current, a proneness to ramble and alter their channels, a copiousness of deposit, and an extent of periodical inundation, which recal the astonishment of Herodotus at the proceedings of the Nile, and which the New World hardly surpasses.

But the points of contrast are particularly worth attention, both on their own account, and in their historical and social bearings.

The Brahmaputra and the Indus, rising far to the north, in the remoter regions of the Himalaya, and describing a vast snake-like coil around their Alpine home, pour their waters into the plain on the confines of the country; and seem never to be identified with its life, or endeared to the memory of its inhabitants, or intimately connected with its civilization. The shortness of its Indian course accounts for this in the case of the Brahmaputra. And two circumstances explain it in that of the Indus. First, the invader has ever come that way; and turbulence, devastation, idleness, sterility, and poverty, have been the successive consequences of the fact or the dread of incursion. Secondly, how far the result of neglected human effort I know not, but as a fact it seems, that a large portion of the Indus valley either has always been, or has relapsed into, a hopeless desert; and that within historical memory that desert has largely encroached on the once comparatively fertile country. Where works of irrigation are neglected or destroyed in a tropical climate, and the soil is thin, such a retrograde process goes on rapidly. Long and desolate sand hills occur between the Indus and the Aravulli. Salt pervades the ground far up country; and the streams that run westward

from those mountains flow into a river, which does not reach the Indus, but either loses itself in the sand, or empties itself into the Great Salt Runn. The absence of tributaries from the east, after the junction of the Punjnud—the united channel of the Punjab rivers—is probably connected with what seems a fact, that the Indus has been gradually trending more westward. Thus between Sind and the Aravalli, the large Province of Rajputana or Ajmir is mainly a desert, dotted with oases, in which the archaic Rajput communities still exhibit a striking resemblance to their ancestors, who in the same neighbourhood confronted Alexander. An earthquake, as lately as A. D. 1819, has much altered the mouth or rather the delta of the Indus. Possibly previous convulsions may have had much to do with the barrenness of the whole region. Cutch also is a country of volcanic origin. The hills in that island and in Kattywar seem to be (as I have already intimated) the geological commencement of the Aravalli range. At the same time it may be observed, the form of both districts appears to favor the idea that, rounded off as they are, they may be relics of a vast, prehistoric Delta district, when the Indus rolled its mighty waters further east, and battled with the sea and the united stream of the Nerbudda, the Tapti, and other rivers; and when the rocks or narrow islands of that day became gradually silted up and clothed upon:—until they were amplified and almost completely attached to the main land.

The spaces between the Punjab rivers, the *Doabs* as they are called, differ greatly in fertility; and while the desert re-appears between the Chenab and the Ravi, the Julindur Doab, encircled by the Sutledge and the Beas, and far in the higher north-east region, is exuberantly productive.

It is difficult, in a few sentences, and without creating an impression of exaggeration, to convey a just idea of the manifold interest attaching to the Ganges, and its kindred stream the Jumna, regarded merely from a physical point of view. That this most sacred river has been to the Hindoo much what the Nile was to the Egyptian of old, and that its banks are crowded with historical cities and famous associations—are common-places. But it is also, as I have already said of these northern river areas generally, a typical study for the hydrographer. We speak of the Ganges as a single river. But it is rather, in fact, a geographical expression for a vast confluence of mighty streams, each many hundred miles in length, and fed from innumerable sources:—the whole forming an enormous and intricate system of Himalayan drainage, with contributions from the southern table land, less intricate indeed, but hardly inferior in the size and length of many tributaries; this prodical accumulation of waters poured through a country everywhere adapted to profit by it; sloping gently and gracefully towards the Bay of Bengal; teeming with fertility; lubricated and enriched each year by the wide expanse and liberal deposits of the inundation; scored in the lower course of the stream by old and deserted channels and *jeels* or beds of lakes; ending at last in a wondrous region—*ἐπίκτητός τε γῆ, καὶ δῶρον τοῦ ποταμοῦ*—(as Herodotus expresses it of the Nile Delta,) so loamy that for 400 miles, it is said, not a pebble is to be found; so rankly and pestilentially fertile at its extremity the *Sunderbunds*, that human life can hardly be sustained, and, as Mr. Buckle would say, “nature,” in this wild haunt of the tiger and the jungle fever, “dominates man.” Such are a few of the more prominent characteristics of what may not improperly be called a unique river.

The extent and complication of its tributary system can only be appreciated by a study of the map. But one or two examples will illustrate how truly it is rather a confluence of mighty rivers than a single stream. The Sun Cosi from the east and the Gunduk from the west of Katmandu, the remote capital of Nepal, join at last, though at different points, the great gathering of waters. But while the former brings with it the added volume of many not unimportant rivers; the latter enters the Ganges almost at the same spot as the Gogra from the north-west, and the Sone from Central India. The Gogra again is a common term for a collection of large and long streams; and the tributaries of the great Sone are legion. Once more; above the junction of the Ganges and the Jumna, or in the Doab Proper, the complication of northern waters becomes almost bewildering. But not to mention the long channel of the Betwa and other streams from the southern table land, the Chumbul alone is in itself a host of rivers, and rivals in length the separate course of the Jumna.

Well may the Hindoo dread the Indus, and revere the Ganges. Nature and man have stamped for him the impress of terror on the former name: the latter personifies the vivifying and widely-diffused powers of Nature; and has in every age been associated with facility of existence and communication, social prosperity, and political power. What the Danube was to the trembling citizen of Constantinople in the early middle ages, that and worse than that has been the Indus to the Hindoo. What Normandy in the later middle ages was to the French political arithmetician; that and better than that has been the Gangetic Plain to the exacting ministers of the Delhi sovereigns.

It is impossible to comprise, within the limits of a single Lecture, even a general description of the ample and diversified block of highland that stretches from the Neelgherries to the Rajmahal Hills; and from the Aravulli Mountains to the Eastern Ghats. But a few characteristic particulars may be given. The greater portion of the north-eastern part of the region, or roughly speaking from the Eastern Ghats and the banks of the Godavery to the Mekal Hills and the Subunrika River, is and apparently always has been in a very primitive and indeed savage state; the bulk of the inhabitants being prehistoric races, under turbulent and ferocious chieftains, living in wild forests, possessing few of the arts of life, and little connected with the history of the Peninsula. The western portion of the block on the contrary teems, from north to south, with historical associations; has been the nursery, the base, and the battle-field of every indigenous power (except the Sikhs) that for centuries has aspired to empire; and has been as closely connected with the military, as the Gangetic Valley with the industrial, life of India. And the complex political geography of the country still bears obvious traces of this fact in every direction. Thus, when defeated by the invading Mussulman in early times, the hereditary chief of the warrior caste, the representative of the Solar Dynasty, retired to the unfrequented country near the eastern slopes of the Aravulli; whence his tribesmen in after days went forth to contest vigorously the empire of India with Baber himself. And both the western desert and the table land above, as well as the park-like Guzerat, are still tenanted by a host of gallant, haughty, dissipated lordlings, who present a striking contrast in character to the ordinary

Hindoo type. Thus again, when Baber's Empire was waning, the ignobler Jats made themselves strong in hill forts not far removed from the imperial city. And while no single place, defended by natives, ever resisted the English so stoutly, and frequently, and with such loss to our countrymen, as the Jat stronghold of Bhurtpore; this people is still represented in the same district, and at Alwar and Machery.

But the importance of geographical circumstances in war, and the extreme difficulty of reducing a mountain community under an able leader, were even more strikingly exhibited in the case of the Marathas. This is not the occasion on which to trace their career. But as I have already said:—"the sublime country of the Western Ghats, with its deep recesses, its umbrageous woods, its steep fastnesses, and the rugged and impracticable Concan at its base, furnished [Sivaji] with a secure and inaccessible retreat from pursuit, and a constant repository for his spoil; as well as with a race of hardy clansmen on whose fidelity he could implicitly rely, for among them he had been bred, and with their aid had performed his earliest feats." What Holland was to the Dutch against Philip the Second—that were the Ghats and the Concan to the Marathas against Aurungzib. Thus, after maintaining their independence against the Empire, this singular people proceeded to conquer a great portion of the highland, and not only the extinct Rajah of Satara and the Peishwa, but all their great chiefs except one (the Guikwar) had, indeed still have, their seats in this upper region—Sindia at Gwalior, Holkar at Indore, the deposed and despoiled Bonsla at Nagpore.

In connexion with the Marathas I may just mention also, that the valleys of the Nerbudda

and the Tapti ineffectually sheltered their bad imitators the Pindarries from our arms. Nor need I dwell on the fact, that decayed and dismembered Imperialism is still represented in the transmuted Mogul functionary, the modern Nizam, who holds the centre of the Dekkan, and rules—or professes to rule—at Hyderabad.

What Sivaji was to Aurungzib, that Hyder Ally long threatened to be, indeed may be said to have been, to the English. And the connexion between the character of his country and his successful warfare against them is so close, that it may be well to enter rather more in detail into a subject so intimately affecting our own fortunes.

Mysore proper is conterminous with the southern sweep of the Ghats; and is thus, so to speak, a vast natural fortress, surrounded on three sides by very formidable, though not impregnable, barriers, but exposed on the north, so as to be easily overrun by invaders from the heart of the Dekkan.

And the history of Hyder and Tippoo is strictly in accordance with these geographical peculiarities. Not to mention the occasional visits of the Nizam, the Maratha from the north is ever hovering on and over-passing the frontier; levying *Chout*, pillaging and devastating the country, occupying the strongholds,—more than once assailing and beleaguering the capital itself.

While, on the other hand, from behind the screen of their hills, through the gates of their yawning and treacherous passes, from the vantage ground of their commanding plateau, working (as a soldier would say) on the interior lines of their central position;—the fierce and crafty barbarians inspire in the English at their feet a mysterious dread; watch and anticipate the movements of their antagonists; conceal their own

operations till the time arrives for delivering the swift and terrible blow; elude pursuit in their lofty fastness; cross and recross the Peninsula, dealing their strokes alternately to right and left against dissevered armies, too scanty to cooperate along so extended a line of frontier.

A few remarks on the principal Dekkan rivers will complete what I have space to say on the central upland of India. They all flow (as I have observed) eastward into the Bay of Bengal; but may be distinguished as follows. The Mahanuddy is perhaps the shortest, but is the most navigable, and has on the whole the largest delta; flows through the wildest country; is most destitute of important tributaries; and reaches the sea near one of the holiest places in India—Juggernath. The course of the Godavery is the longest, extending right across the Peninsula; rising not far from Bombay, near that remarkable feat of modern engineering the Thull Ghat railway cutting; and forming, during the later part of its course, the northern boundary of the Nizam's territories; (the Pranhita, one of its larger tributaries, and the Northern Ghats completing that boundary line.) The Kistna has the largest drainage area, and the most numerous and celebrated feeders; one of them, the Bhima, rising a little south of the Godavery, and due east of Bombay, while the Tunga and the Bhudra, (whose united streams form the Toombudra and join the Kistna at the extreme south of the Nizam's dominions,) and the Hugri have their sources far down in the western Mysore country. The Kistna also forms the boundary of the Nizam's territories on the south, until its final abrupt turn in the same direction. Lastly, the Cavery, though perhaps *positively* the shortest of the four, is fraught with the most interesting historical memories to Englishmen.

Indeed it may be said to symbolize, as it were, inversely in its course the career of the British in India. At its mouth we first engaged with natives in a contest, which was the prelude to our long and obstinate struggle with the French, and which resulted in our acquiring there a post of much importance with a view to the later war. The chief scene of the Anglo-French struggle was at Trichinopoly, on the banks of the same river. Our next internecine war was with the Mysorean, whose capital was at Seringapatam, still on the Cavery; the capture of which place extinguished the Empire of Tippoo, and made us the strongest Power in the south. Yet twice more we had to vindicate our supremacy against the insolent challenge or the sullen opposition of the Maratha, whose starting-point, like that of the Cavery, had been the Western Ghats, whence like that river he had advanced to meet the sea-born invader.

The smaller rivers, as the Palaar and the two Pennars, drain the space between the Kistna and the Cavery, and water the Carnatic Plain.

The triangular block with which the Peninsula comes to an end reproduces many of the features of the regions further north. The Palnai Hills, in which its highland culminates, confront and rival in elevation the Neelgherries, on the opposite side of the Palghat-Pass, or Gap of Coimbatore. The Cardamums, like the main chain of the Ghats, keep closer to the western than the eastern coast. Hence Travancore is narrower and more undulating, not to say precipitous: Madura and Tinnevely are in general flat, river-traversed plains, in which the Vaiga, &c. repeat, on a diminished scale proportioned to the locality, the operations of the Cavery and the other Dekkan rivers. Some distance from Cape Comorin the

Cardamums sink suddenly to 2,000 feet, and the Cape itself is (I believe) still not far short of 500. The whole of this block is abundantly watered both by streams and by the *monsoon* torrents, and exhibits the same exuberant fertility and, especially on the west, the same woodland characteristics that are found on the Malabar coast proper. While in the last century Tinnevely was for years a fearful scene of anarchy,—hill chiefs and *colleries*, Mysorean irregulars and English Sepoys, revolted servants and relatives of the Carnatic Nawab, and soldiers of fortune who fought on their own account, reproducing in a coarser and more confused form the phenomena of the Great Coast War; this Province is now chiefly known among us in connexion with the remarkable—not to say unique—progress of Christianity within its limits, and the social improvements which have been the steady result of that progress. On the other hand, across the mountain range the primitive Rajahship of Travancore presents a hardly less satisfactory spectacle as a model Native State, under English protection and auspices, assimilating English resources, including University Education, but unannexed, and undevoured by English “civilianism,” as it so nearly was in the last century by Tippoo’s appetite for conquest.

Some of the characteristics of the coast line, and of the lower lands between the Ghats and the coast, have been incidentally mentioned. But, at the risk of some little repetition, it may be well to attempt such a general sketch of their features as is commensurate with my limits. The sharply defined, continuous, and almost straight line of the western range contrasts obviously with the wandering and nearly broken course of the eastern crests. Also, the general proximity of the former to the sea, with the remoteness from it of the

latter. Nor is it difficult to perceive, that the western lowland is often no plain at all; while the eastern is in no small measure shaped by river deposits. But it must be added, that the double formation—the lower range or “Under-cliff,” and the final summits of the Himalaya—is repeated along much of the Eastern Ghats: that the deltas of the great Dekkan rivers rival in fertility, though on a reduced scale, the Gangetic plain: while the character of the coast, the silting up of the river mouths, and the prevalence of a violent surf along the whole eastern sea-margin, afford not a single good harbor between the Mahanuddy and Cape Comorin.

Nor are matters much mended, in this respect, on the western side; for though the surf is not here prevalent, except off the southern coast, the character of the geology is fatal to the existence of spacious and landlocked havens. Estuaries indeed there are; but these are treacherous receptacles; and even Bombay, though presenting from the hills which overlook it one of the most beautiful, indeed magnificent panoramas in the world, is by no means so readily accessible to the sailor as an unprofessional critic might imagine.

How far the Hindoo’s dread and hatred of the sea are connected with this absence of good harbours, I must not now attempt to estimate. But I have on a previous occasion pointed out the important influence which, in concert with the Monsoon, it exercised upon the course of the Anglo-French contest.*

* “But the most serious impediment to warfare on the mainland, and a total obstacle to maritime enterprises, was the Monsoon. This prevails, on the Coromandel coast, from about October to December. It is ushered in generally by gales and thunderstorms of appalling violence: it swells the rivers with surprising rapidity and volume;

And the peculiarities of the Malabar coast must not be altogether ignored, even in so summary a sketch of Indian Geography as the present.

No maritime *plain*—strictly speaking—at all. A comparatively narrow strip of land between the sea and the Ghats; land broken up, contorted, writhing (as it were) from the rugged and indented sea-margin, till after preliminary gambols of a wilder character it shoots aloft in steep and terrific cliffs, and craggy summits, which I shall not attempt to describe, and whose beauty and majesty must be seen to be appreciated. Magnificent forests clothe these elevations, and spread far down into the wild country below, and extend their mysterious and treacherous shade for many a mile along the table land above. Impetuous torrents leap from the mountain sides; rive, and still further diversify, in their headlong career seaward, the uneven and craggy surface of the coast land; and the hollow *nullahs* of the dry season are, on the approach of rain, transformed in a few hours into deep, furious, and impassable cataracts. The

fills the deep channels of the water-courses, and reduces the country variously to a lake or a morass. The comfortless chilliness of this dreary season, the effect of constant wind and an all-pervading atmosphere of moisture, alternating with capricious bursts of fiery sunshine, can only be appreciated by those who have felt it; and is a most trying experience, whether to a native or to a European constitution. Harbourless, and threatened by the raging surf that rolls ever on these shores, and most fiercely at such a time, the fleets were compelled to quit the coast and seek shelter at a distance, before the Monsoon broke; or to remain at the risk of being beaten to pieces at their anchorage in the open roadsteads, or to brave the perils of the mid-ocean at its wildest season. Thus the settlers were left to themselves and their own resources during a quarter of the year; unaided by that branch of the service on which they so much depended for their military efficiency, and even for their existence in the country of their exile."

thunderstorms of these regions are terrific: the deluges of rain, violent, copious, and frequent beyond all comparison elsewhere in India. There is a native saying that, on the Malabar coast, the Monsoon lasts nine months. Roads throughout a great part of the country there are none; the nature of the ground, and the luxuriance of the forests and jungles alike preclude them. Nature here (to use once more Mr. Buckle's expression) dominates man.

EXTRACTS.

I.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MOGUL GOVERNMENT.

THE power of the Emperor was theoretically absolute. The property, the liberty, the lives of his subjects were at his unconditional disposal. According to the received courtly doctrine, he was the exclusive owner of the whole soil of the Empire. He could impose, enhance, and abolish taxes at his pleasure. He could establish monopolies, and regulate and prohibit commerce and manufactures. He could compel the people of one district to migrate to another. He could exact military service, and levy military contributions, to an indefinite extent. Patronage, both civil and military, was entirely in his hands. He could raise a man of the lowest class, and of no experience, to the highest rank, and to the most important offices. And the most exalted officials he could degrade *suo nutu*. He could punish any of his subjects with the most capricious and extreme severity;—fine, imprison, torture, mutilate, put them to death, on mere suspicion, or in the indulgence of mere passion.

The extent of his territories, the pomp of his Court, the vast number and splendid equipments of his armies, the conventionally submissive tone of his ministers, his provincial rulers, and his generals, the hyperbolical lordliness of his swelling titles, and, in most cases until the decline of the Empire, the ability and vigor which he displayed in his personally conducted government, combined to give an impression of awful

reality and unfaltering force to these formidable prerogatives.

Nor could it be otherwise, seeing that the sword had given the Mogul the empire of India; that no permanent landed aristocracy, such as has arisen in Teutonic communities, for some time existed to make constant head against Imperial despotism; that collective popular organization for a similar purpose was quite out of the question; that the social compact was an unhistorical European speculation, the first conditions of which were inconceivable to an Asiatic; that neither the principles of Islam nor the precedents of Oriental rule favored the limitation of the powers essentially reserved to a sovereign who, from the nature of the case, was peculiarly and permanently in the position (as Dr. Arnold would have said) of the general of an army of occupation in a conquered country.

But if the ideal power of the Emperor was so unrestricted, the actual checks on its exercise were numerous and effective. The general circumstances of his political situation,—as a Mussulman alien in the midst of a vast Hindoo population, a large proportion of which was by no means unwarlike, and a Mogul ruling over fiery and turbulent Affghans, the memory of whose domination was fresh and suggestive; his dependence for the maintenance of his authority, and the execution of his decrees, upon ministers, satraps, generals, and ultimately upon his troops; the public opinion, at least the general and well-ascertained sentiments and the strong prejudices of his subjects, whether Mahometan or Hindoo; the constantly impending danger of insurrection, or of violent attempts to redress public or avenge private grievances, if not to remove the despotic author or favorer of them; the continuous tradition of moderate and on the whole

equitable and beneficent rule, established even in the heat of conquest by Baber, developed, systematised, and rationally expounded under Acher, and strengthened by the almost superstitious reverence commonly paid to custom in India; and last not least, the strong sense, forbearing temper, and liberal views of most of the Emperors, obviated many of the evils of despotism, and combined not so much to cramp its energies, as to give them a safe if not always a humane direction.

Though internally the Empire was rarely, before the time of Aurungzib, disturbed by commotion and revolution, the work of conquest went on steadily, almost unceasingly, on the frontiers. Rebels were crushed, at times, with merciless severity, (for the generous and bold policy of Acher in forgiving even *such* offenders was not always in vogue :) criminals were dealt with both summarily and severely: capricious and revolting cruelties towards individuals were not unfrequent on the part of the less enlightened and virtuous sovereigns: and mere suspicion was too often pretext enough for degrading and oppressing distinguished officials. Still the general conduct of the Mogul Rulers not only exhibited no approach to the proverbial standard of Oriental tyranny, but would (I suspect) sustain a favorable comparison with that of too many European Cæsars, Saviours of Society, Heroes of *coups d'état*, and Paternal Despots, whether in ancient or in modern times.

Nor must it in this connexion be forgotten, that Aurungzib himself died before we were well rid of the danger of Stuart restoration; and more than a century before our Statute Book was purged of laws, the ingenious cruelty of which would have excited the astonishment and contempt, if not the horror, even of that stern and unscrupulous sovereign.

and let in the full tide of cupidity and military license. Yet he was not overwhelmed, or even embarrassed by it; but calmly devoted this self-seeking and devouring force to the evolution of a new political order, and the secure vindication of regulated liberty. He fanned the glowing flame of ambition, alike in his soldiers and in their leaders: yet he seemed never even in danger of being consumed by it, or of forfeiting the ascendancy which he had grasped so cunningly and unscrupulously. He throve by fraud and treachery: yet he was never betrayed. Lawlessness was his very *raison d'être*, and that of his community: yet he was a strict legislator; and his laws were rarely infringed, and never with impunity. In short, he was at once the Lord of Misrule, involving the countries which he overran in a whirlwind of discord and confusion; and the mighty Spirit which could

“ Ride the whirlwind and direct the storm.”

Such is the paradoxical impression which the mere story of Sivaji leaves on the mind of the English student. But a survey of his institutions will remove the apparent contradiction; and will explain, not only how a robber chieftain rose to be the founder of what was, for a century, the most formidable and wide-spread Power in India, but how, whatever his moral laxity in such an age and state of society, he deserved to succeed in his great and by no means simply selfish enterprise.

Some general observations will perhaps here be not out of place.

(1) The predatory occupation, and the treacherous, even murderous, practices of Sivaji and his followers were quite compatible with the coexistence of many virtues in the same men. Macaulay

has argued that a vice not condemned by public opinion does not sink the average man at least in his own estimation, and therefore does not so thoroughly corrupt and debase him, as one which the society in which he lives has distinctly and strongly reprobated. And those who remember that the Great Duke, the incarnation of independently realised and manly duty, thought himself bound to fight a duel when Prime Minister of England, may be inclined to admit that there is much truth in Macaulay's distinction. Now so completely did the point of honor with the Marathas consist in plundering successfully, that their standard expression for gaining a victory was—"to spoil the enemy."

Treachery, too, has always been esteemed among them legitimate, and speaking generally laudable, in public affairs; though in private life I have found them conspicuously faithful and straightforward. How far assassination was considered venial, depended on circumstances. The murder of the Mussulman General, Affzool Khan, by Sivaji himself, was highly approved; that of a Hindoo Rajah, at which he connived, was strongly condemned. But this leads to another remark.

(2) Sivaji and his people, (as I have already said,) even in their warfare, were by no means mere bandits. A halo of heroism, patriotism, and religious zeal invested their proceedings, and induced them to regard the son of Shahji as a predestined, divinely-favored, indeed as an inspired deliverer.

Race, religion, and to a considerable extent geography, discriminated them from the Mahometans of Bijapur and Golconda. With such aliens, and still more with the invading Moguls and the persecuting Aurungzib, they

l a complicated, irreconcilable, and righteous
 rrel. The Gods of the mountains were not

Gods of the plain: the Maratha citizen,
 ether Rajput, Brahmin, Sudra, or of abori-
 al lineage, justly apprehended himself to have
 n defrauded and displaced by the progress of
 hometan conquest in old time; and to be yet
 re seriously and grievously threatened by the
 ance of the Mogul arms and administrative
 tem. And the pent-up mountaineer has con-
 ntly, in similar circumstances, made a sort of
 science of pressing upon the prosperous and
 urious denizens of the open country at his
 . On the whole, both Sivaji and his original
 owers might well hold, and did hold, that in
 ging war after their own fashion with the
 ssulman, they were doing both God and man
 d service, covering themselves with glory, and
 aining not only welcome but creditably retri-
 ive spoils.

3) Gibbon has, in the case of Timour, pointed
 an apparent contradiction very similar to
 t which we are now considering. The general
 iler and devastator of Asia was, at home in
 heart of Tartary, and in relation to his own
 ple, a beneficent legislator. So it was with
 aji. Stern, grasping, vindictive, and treach-
 is towards the hostile Mussulman, he was, as
 as the grim exigencies of his military system
 wed, mild, just, forbearing, and faithful, in
 dealings with his tribesmen, his followers
 erally, and with the inhabitants of districts
 ch submitted to his rule. Not only was

"Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos"

maxim, but he shewed habitual and system-
 consideration for vested interests, religious
 udices, traditional sentiments, stereotyped

habits. Thus, destructive of Mahometan sway, he was conservative of Hindoo nationality; creative of a new, or (as his followers thought) restorative of a purer and more primeval form of native society than had been compatible with the political ascendancy even of their more tolerant Mahometan rulers. Hence he secured the willing obedience and enthusiastic attachment of all classes throughout his native glens; and from his post of vantage could without misgiving pour his forces upon the central plain, or even extend his ravages to the seaboard beyond.

(4) Still, it may be objected, a lawless life begets a general temper of lawlessness. And the sanction and practice of habitual treachery are apt to recoil upon the patron and perpetrator of such practices. Sivaji was not unaware of these dangers; and the history of his descendants soon illustrated the reasonableness of such fears. But he secured himself for the time by what I may call the directness and centralising spirit of his rule. He had ministers, officers, and agents in abundance and of every description; but they were not such by *status*, but by his own appointment: and it was part of his plan that their continuance in office should invariably depend on proved personal fitness and fidelity. He disapproved of *Jaghires*, as tending to root their holders in the soil, and limit the spontaneous action of the Rajah. Hereditary village and district authorities he did not deprive of their dues; but he levied those dues through officers of his own selection, and allowed no fenced villages or other strongholds in his country, except the forts garrisoned by his own trusty instruments and special bands.

And while, in earlier days, he was as careful in picking and inspecting his soldiers as Crom-

well in enrolling his Ironsides; throughout his career he insisted on no man being admitted without the precaution of securing from those already in the service a kind of *bail* for the fidelity and good conduct of the recruit.

Thus he held himself the reins in the conduct of every department. And while, as regarded treachery, his own consummate cunning was more than a match for most plotters, his vigilance was equal to his sagacity. His eye was every where: and, besides the service of recognised spies, he controlled every thing and every body by playing off one class, one race, and one profession against another; by checks and counterchecks; and by secret agency and latent and minute *espionage*, not less complicated or subtle than the famous and intricate machinery of Loyola and his successors.

I proceed to give an outline of his military arrangements in each department.

The student of military history would do well to notice the successive phases of Maratha warfare, from the days of Sivaji to those of Lord Lake, Colonel Wellesley, and Dowlut Rao Sindia. From the few half-naked, undisciplined, and ill-armed mountain rovers, whose unsophisticated gallantry, agility in climbing, and devotion to their hardy and skilful companion in the chace, helped him to seize fortress after fortress on the borders of the Ghats, and to pounce upon and hide away the spoil of the Dekkan;—to the eighty artistically-drilled and well-appointed battalions of Dowlut Rao, officered by Frenchmen, supported by a magnificent park of artillery, and acting in concert with a vast host of showy, dashing, and terrible horsemen, who, in “wild Mahratta battle,” threatened to overwhelm the hero of Assye, and to change the history of the world:—between these two extremes of mili-

tary array the whole orbit of the tactical system seems to have been traversed.

But I confine myself, at present, to Sivaji's own ultimate arrangements. He naturally began with infantry alone, and those exclusively Hindoos, or of the earlier mountain refugee races. Later, after much hesitation, he enlisted Mussulmans—especially Affghans. Cavalry he adopted as soon as his operations in the Dekkan required them. Artillery he never used, except on his last great expedition into the Carnatic Plain, when he persuaded the King of Golconda to lend him a siege train.

Both infantry and cavalry were lightly clad. Both used shields; but I believe that, at this period, neither ever had any other defensive armour. The infantry were divided into *Mawullees* and *Hetkurees*; the cavalry into *Bargeers* and *Sillidars*. The former terms were geographical, denoting the foot soldiers levied in the Ghats and in the Concan respectively. The *Bargeers* were horsemen mounted at Sivaji's expense, and in fact his soldiers, strictly so called, forming collectively the *Pagah*, or household troops. The *Sillidars*, like the Mogul *Akdis*, were of a higher class socially; and were troopers, mounted at their own cost, and more nearly resembling our irregular native cavalry in modern times in India.

The foot were armed with swords and matchlocks, or in some cases, with the newly invented firelock. But for stealthy service, as in night attacks and the capture of forts, each tenth man carried a bow and arrows. The *Hetkurees* were the better marksmen; the *Mawullees* the stouter in hand to hand combats with the sword. The horsemen carried swords, and some had matchlocks. But their characteristic and most efficient

weapon, as in the case of the Cossacks whom they so much resembled, and whose name they adopted through the Moguls, was a long spear. The readers of Erckman-Chatrian's romances will be at no loss to conceive their celerity of movement, their dexterity, or the terror which their sudden apparition was wont to inspire.

On the fidelity of the infantry Sivaji could confidently depend. The *Bargeers* too he could trust better than the *Sillidars*. To check the erratic tendencies of the irregular and too independent horsemen, he therefore, with characteristic prudence, habitually interspersed among them parties of the household cavalry.

In the infantry he had officers of ten, fifty, a hundred, a thousand, five thousand; the last being immediately subordinate to the *Surnobut*, or Commander-in-Chief. The organisation and supervision of the cavalry were more complicated. The smallest division, consisting of twenty-five, was commanded by a *Havildar*. Five such divisions formed a *Jooma*, with its corresponding military officer. Five of these again were massed under a *Soobedar*. Lastly, ten *Soobehs*, really mustering 6250 horsemen, but formally rated at 5000, were united under an officer, whose harsh name I am afraid to mention; and who was immediately subordinate to the Commander-in-Chief, or *Surnobut*. This last was distinct from the chief general of infantry.

But the accounts of the *Soobeh* were managed and audited by separate agents, civilians and either Brahmins or Purvoes, appointed by Sivaji, responsible directly to him, and designed doubtless to act as a check on the military chief. This was also the case with the commander of 5000. Each division also, except the smallest, had its staff of news-writers and professed spies; while

secret emissaries (as I have said) pervaded every part of the army. The foot-soldiers' pay averaged *monthly* (?) from seven or eight shillings of our money to thrice that sum. That of the *Bargeer* was about double the foot-soldiers': while the *Sillidar* had from two to four guineas. Before the army took the field, a strict scrutiny of each soldier was instituted, and for a double purpose. His losses in the field were, if duly proved to have occurred in the public service, replaced. And whatever he brought back in addition to what he took with him he was bound to produce; otherwise it was liable to forfeiture. For all spoil was, in the first instance, Sivaji's property. The captor on presenting it was partly rewarded on the spot, partly recorded for favorable treatment or promotion later. And if he preferred to redeem it, he was usually allowed to do so. Government settled annually all out-standing claims of the soldiers either in ready money, or by bills on the Rajah's revenue collectors. Both to prevent the villagers being oppressed, and to guard against the growth of any power over which he had not complete control, Sivaji did not permit any charges in favor of individuals to be imposed on the revenues of villages. Nor did he suffer cows, women, or peasants to be carried off or ill-treated. The only prisoners he sanctioned were wealthy Mussulmans, or Hindoos in their service, who could afford to repurchase their liberty at a high price. He was fond however of ostentatiously liberating distinguished prisoners, and in this proceeding had no doubt a secret eye to business, as well as to acquiring a reputation for generosity. The strictness of his discipline may be inferred from his visiting with death the offence of taking the field accompanied by a *chère amie*. He was equally exact in reward and punishment.

Rent-free lands in perpetuity he granted to deserving soldiers, to temples, and to the guardians of his forts. He never confiscated sacred revenues, even if devoted to Mussulman rites, or to the memory of Mussulman saints.

His most peculiar military institution, and the nursery of his power, was his fort system. Each stronghold, besides any occasional Maratha force stationed there, had a large and permanent staff of inhabitants and defenders, minutely organised, carefully trained, and warmly interested in its maintenance. Of these, the Marathas proper were destined to fight; the Brahmins were charged with the victualling and other civil cares of the place; the Ramoosees and other primitive tribesmen were appointed to note and baffle the approach of an enemy, and stealthily impede his operations, when he could no longer be diverted from an attack. All these classes were paid by rent-free lands, which descended to their posterity. Sivaji, when campaigning, of course made war support war—and more. But while his cavalry were browsing in the enemy's country, his Brahmin storekeepers were carefully collecting, in the immediate neighbourhood of each fort, the crop of hay and grain, against the approach of the rainy season; when the horsemen and their beasts regularly returned to secure quarters in the hills. Each fort had its Commander-in-Chief, or *Havildar*; and his subordinates were multiplied according to the size and importance of the place.

“Orders,” says Grant Duff, “in respect to ingress and egress, rounds, watches, and patrols, care of water, grain, stores, and ammunition, were most minute; and the officer of each department was furnished with distinct rules for his guidance, from which no deviation was permitted. A rigid

economy characterised all Sivaji's institutions regarding expenditure." (vol. i. p. 232.)

His civil government, and his distribution of offices in that department, will be explained on another occasion. But I may remark in conclusion, as to his military arrangements, that there was little of barbarism in this barbarian's dispositions.

III.

THE NIZAM AND THE PEISHWA.

THE convulsed and semi-chaotic condition of the moribund Empire, and the nature of the Maratha Power, combine to impart a bewildering complexity to the events of the period on which we are entering. But while much of the detail may be safely, and indeed profitably, neglected by those who would rise to a comprehensive view of the general tendencies and permanent lessons of the time; a considerable approach to unity, and even dramatic interest, is afforded by following the fortunes of the two singular men, who are at once the most prominent and influential characters at the moment, and the founders of two of the greatest Houses that flourished in India long after their own careers had been run.

In many respects the circumstances and characters of Nizam-ul-Mulk and Baji Rao were very similar.

Alike the sons of fathers who were, comparatively if not strictly speaking, *novi homines*, but who securely prepared the way for their sons' exaltation; alike familiar in early life with the localities and the intricate politics of the Dekkan, with the mysteries of the corrupt and tricky Imperial Court, and with the peculiarities of Maratha warfare; alike accustomed to regard the Southern Provinces, not to say the whole

Empire, as a vast debateable land, and its revenues as the natural prey of daring or insidious aggression, and legalised spoliation; alike trained to consider their respective Sovereigns as august in pretension, venerable in popular estimation, useful as fountains of honor, and ratifiers of bad titles, but as equally inevitable puppets in the hands of skilful and determined ministers; alike conscious of being constantly exposed to hereditary enmities, and official and personal jealousies, which made wary walking at all times absolutely necessary:—they resembled each other also in unbounded ambition, farsightedness, tenacity of purpose, resolution in the battle-field, and freedom from the darker shades of cruelty which stained the characters of so many of their eminent contemporaries. Both seem to have been simple in personal tastes and habits, though both knew well the value of pompous titles and conventional display. Each had learned to desist and embrace much that belonged properly to the other's sphere. Nizam-ul-Mulk resorted very successfully on many occasions to the Maratha tactics, and made a great point of securing Maratha alliances and contingents: Baji Rao coveted and obtained imperial grants and offices, and even in adjusting the relations of his tribesmen among themselves adopted Mussulman designations.

Yet there was a great contrast between the two men; and singularly enough the national temper of the Brahmin and the Tooranee Mogul seemed reversed. Baji Rao, though a skilful politician and a profound statesman, was at the same time a comparatively straightforward, plain-spoken soldier, prompt to act—a man for a word and a blow. Nizam-ul-Mulk, though especially in early life bold as a lion when his passions were roused, and swift

and terrible as fate when he deemed the time for action come, was habitually cautious, calculating, given to a variety of expedients, fond of entangling his adversaries in a network of diplomacy, and of reducing their strength by cunningly fomenting dissensions among their followers. This lesson he had no doubt learned in the bad school of Aurungzib. As usual, the tendency grew upon him; and, in the end, the practice of deferring too long the decisive effort cost him dear, as we shall see.

The original contrast of disposition in these two remarkable men was increased by the circumstances in which they found themselves placed, or into which they naturally drifted. Though (as I have said) Baji Rao had jealous rivals, his father had bequeathed to him a decided preeminence in the Court and counsels of Satara, which the son's abilities were quite adequate to sustain and confirm. Nizam-ul-Mulk, on the other hand, though introduced and promoted under Ghazi-ud-Deen's auspices, was but one of a crowd of ambitious and able public men, many of whom had originally much higher claims than himself to the Emperor's favor. He was, in fact, far more than his rival, the architect of his own fortunes. And consummate art was requisite to construct, out of the slippery and crumbling materials within his reach, an edifice that should bear the formidable assaults sure to be directed against it.

Again; the Rajah was a mild, trustful, and acquiescent master: while the Emperor was fickle, jealous, and equally incapable of firmly asserting his own authority, and of steadily supporting that of a minister. The perpetual slave of volatile courtiers and low favorites, he was ever, at their instigation, intriguing to undermine the power of those, who might otherwise have served him faithfully, but who were thus reduced, almost in self-

defence, to a distrustful, tortuous, and antagonistic line. Baji Rao's attitude was simple, loyal, and at the same time popular : in extending his own conquests he deferred habitually to the Rajah's authority, and, through his father's wise arrangements, promoted the interest of the whole community. That, in so doing, he should gradually supplant his master in effective influence, and establish, on behalf of his own family, what amounted to a federal hegemony if not a sovereignty, was natural, but did not involve a daily practice of crafty devices, or the studious many-sidedness inevitable from Nizam-ul-Mulk's ambiguous position. Lastly, the latter depended mostly on himself. The former, besides the sympathy and occasional assistance of a Rajput Prince, was throughout zealously aided both in the field and in the Cabinet by a like-minded brother, Chimnaji Appa.

IV.

THE CENTURY OF TRANSITION.

Between Aurungzib's accession and Azof Jah's death nearly a century has elapsed. How momentous to the fortunes of India, how characteristic of Oriental society, has been that century! The Great Mogul has been raised to his highest pitch of splendor and pride; has yearned for other realms to conquer; and has found victory but the prelude of defeat, and rash extension the sure and active cause of disaster, feebleness, and decay. The Empire is now a fast-vanishing quantity in the political arithmetic of India; though the shadow long outlasts the substance, and lends a delusive sanction to proceedings that belong in reality to a new order of things. But, what is now to be that new order? The question is a perplexing one for the daring prophet, who would cast the horoscope of the several possible aspirants to the sovereignty that is passing into abeyance. The Maratha roams freely over the whole Peninsula; rules as a domiciliated chieftain in large districts; awes the nations by the rapidity of his movements, the artfulness of his devices, the insulting and exacting lordliness of his pretensions. The Abdalli, indeed, is appointed to chastise him, and humble his pride, before the world is many years older. Yet his power is destined long to outlast the disastrous day of

Paniput, and to threaten universal anarchy by the gradual resolution of society into a vast cluster of rival gipsy camps. The Subahdar, on the uplands of the Dekkan, has founded a great house, established a powerful state, accumulated vast treasures, and trained his family in the emulous school of ambition. The lessons of the dying warrior and schemer will certainly not be lost on his posterity. But who is now to take up his difficult part, and carry forward his soaring banner? Below the Eastern Ghats, fast by the surf-lashed shore of Coromandel, a man of rare genius from the far West is already meditating the subjection of the native Powers to the authority of France. England, meanwhile, is rearing on the same coast a genius of a different though kindred character, to counteract the Frenchman's plots. But who could have foreseen, that from the petty principality of Mysore should shortly emerge a hero, who by the spontaneous energy of his nature, and the skilful combination of craft and force, of Eastern and Western resources and appliances, should become the foremost and most masterful man in the South? And after the collapse of French ambition, should found a mighty kingdom, out-manceuvre the Maratha, vilipend the Nizam, and dictate peace to the English at the gates of Madras?

V.

HYDER'S TRIUMPHAL MARCH.

The whole army is computed at 54,000 ; of which 20,000 are said to have been cavalry. Whether the infantry preceded or followed the pompous array that I am about to describe, is not mentioned. But the native cavalry were drawn up on the right of the line of march ; and after each corps had saluted Hyder, it wheeled to the left about, and galloped off to the head of the column that flanked the road, to repeat the operation on the arrival of the Nabob thither. In front of all marched 500 *Hirkarras*, which perhaps I may venture to translate King's Messengers, handsomely clad, each riding a camel. The post of military honor in the procession was reserved for the European cavalry, who marched off the ground immediately after the *Hirkarras*, saluting Hyder as they went ; and continued to form the advance. They are specified as two *regiments* of Hussars, and one of Dragoons. But I am not able to state what was really the number of each so-called regiment ; and suspect that it was rather scanty. Next came, in long and ceremonious order, what was called the first procession of elephants. First two, each bearing a standard, which displayed on a blue ground, fringed with gold—the one an emblem of the sun ; the other one of the moon and stars. A third elephant carried the famous drum,

known as the Grand Tom-Tom; the terrible sound of which, suddenly awakening the echoes around the unsuspecting English camp, was wont first to apprise our countrymen of the proximity of their dreaded foe; and which they learned to recognise with the same mysterious horror, that came upon the warlike Spaniards when they listened, beleaguered in Tenochtitlan, or struggling in the dykes that surrounded it, to the sullen and awful utterances of a somewhat similar instrument. The Great Tom-Tom was appropriately followed by the band; consisting of thirty-two performers, disposed on four more elephants, and wielding smaller drums, and what, for want of more precise English equivalents, may be described as flutes, hautbois, and trumpets. Lastly, five of the same animals, martially arrayed, and termed "elephants of war," bore gilded howdahs, in each of which were six chosen warriors in complete armor, and provided with formidable guns, of the blunderbus kind, adapted for a spreading discharge of bullets.

After the elephants advanced two regiments of Abyssinian cavalry. All these horsemen too were in complete armor (that of the one regiment bronzed, of the other polished and glistening in the piercing rays of the Indian summer sun); they bore lances: long plumes of red and black ostrich feathers depended from their helmets; and the same colors were conspicuous in the trappings of their horses. A numerous body of spearmen on foot, lightly equipped for active exertion in the chace, in crossing mountain defiles and intricate forests, and generally in irregular warfare, succeeded. They wore little clothing, except a sort of close fitting drawers, that would have been much admired by the advanced school of modern athletes, and a scarf of silk. Their long spears were decorated with ostrich

feathers, and little bells, the jingle of which on the march was incessant. These, again, were succeeded by a number of officials of the highest practical importance, where such an army, and such a general were concerned. They carried small banners, the presence of one of which announced to the locality Hyder's *chow*, or protection, and restrained military licence. The nobility and courtiers came next, in regular but self-adjusted order; precedence not being enforced among a distinguished body, who all appeared as volunteers on a gala day. "Nothing," says my authority, "could be more brilliant than this troop; they were armed from head to foot, and mounted on the most beautiful horses; their arms were damasked and encrusted with gold and silver; many had their casques (*sic*) ornamented with white feathers, formed of pearls and precious stones; and great numbers had coats of mail, gilt and enamelled; the bridles of their horses were enriched with pearls and other valuable stones, and with plumes of feathers. The number of this troop varied every day, being volunteers; but it was usually about six hundred."

This gorgeous company was followed by eight personages, splendidly mounted, and rather ambiguously represented as "esquires or huntsmen;" after whom came twelve grooms, each leading on foot one of Hyder's state chargers, in rich housings.

The Nabob's horses announced the approach of Hyder himself. The sovereign is naturally preceded by his officials, high and low. Thus now a party of *Chobdars* or footmen, with black, gold-headed staves, ushered in twelve more imposing functionaries, *Sauquedars*, or chamberlains, on horseback, each brandishing a mace of gold or silver, ornamented with a wrought crown. These were succeeded, in an ascending scale of rank,

by the great court officers; among whom are mentioned particularly the Steward, the Chief Usher, and the Sword-bearer. A massive gold chain decorated the person, and announced the dignity of each. Between them and the Nabob intervened a still more imposing character, the *Purzadah*, or Grand Almoner, marching, in solitary state, on an elephant with green trappings. At last appeared Hyder's own elephant, a magnificent animal; formerly the property of the ill-fated Rani of Bednore. On each side of this lordly beast, which (we are told) towered to double their height, were other elephants; that on the right conveying Reza Sahib, and the Nabob's sons being on the left. Hyder's elephant had yellow caparisons; a color adopted also in the decorations of his howdah; which was surmounted by four globes of silver; and from it hung by silver chains, as tokens of the subjected royalty of the Zamorin, his former insignia, small axes, the *fascies* of the fallen Monarch. On the forehead of the stately animal blazed a golden shield, emblematic of the sun. Two attendants preceded and managed him. Another rode in a separate pavilion behind the Nabob, and plied him with betel, which the native chews as indefatigably as an English sailor his *quid*: while, on each side, another servant had the precarious honor of clinging to the foot-board, and holding on to the howdah with one hand, while, with the other, he swung, or rather revolved, a species of fan, of white peacock feathers, to keep off the flies.

Such was the upholstery of the royal presence. But we have no account of Hyder's mien on the occasion; though, little as he was wont to betray his secret thoughts when he desired to conceal them, we may well imagine that they were now

mixed and ardent; that he proudly reverted to his last warlike ascent of the Ghats, from the same quarter, when he went to consummate the ruin of Kunde Rao: and that he asked himself often and anxiously, as he thus rode on in solemn and well-ordered state—How would it fare with him, and this spectacular array, in the approaching contest with enemies so much more numerous and formidable?

After Hyder's elephant came a long procession of not less than 200 others in pairs, richly and variously caparisoned; and each carrying three persons, the rider, properly so called, the *Mahaut* or driver, and a menial behind. Many of the pavilions were of wrought silver, some decorated with jewels; while gold and silver lace were profusely lavished upon them.

An allegorical procession succeeded. Five elephants sustained what were called the "Honors"—certain devices, darkly betokening the virtues which were obligatory on a sovereign, and were freely ascribed to Hyder. First came a golden mosque, of delicate workmanship, with a cover of white satin, which was raised on passing through a town. Next, "the head of a fish, whose scales were formed of jewels and enamel," whence hung the horse's tail, so famous as a Turkish emblem of war. Thirdly appeared a monstrous waxen candle, white in hue, and bestowed in a golden candlestick; which was followed by a staff, to which were appended two small vessels, also of gold. Lastly, a round chair, inlaid with ivory, and decorated with gold. The special significance of each device is nowhere explained. I conclude with the words of the original. "After the honors followed two regiments of Abyssinians on horseback like the two first; and the procession was closed by 200 Caffres on foot, clothed in scarlet,

with silver collars, and armed with lances varnished black, and interspersed with silver gilding ; all the train was inclosed between a double rank of men on foot, clothed in white silk, having lances in their hands about fourteen feet long, varnished black, and adorned with plates of silver, at the armed ends of which were small red streamers with silver flames ; the lance-men marched at such a distance from each other as to inclose the whole by joining their lances." Such was Hyder's holiday pomp, on the eve of his first pitting his fortune against that of the Great Company, which was so soon to know him and his army in the grim severity and wild turmoil of actual war !





